



# HOUSE COMMITTEE ON

# **VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

*Republicans | Ranking Member Phil Roe, M.D.*

## **H.R. 2109: Boosting Rates of American Veteran Employment (BRAVE) Act of 2019**

### **Background:**

In May 2019, the veteran unemployment rate was 2.7%, which is 0.9% percentage points lower than the overall unemployment rate of 3.6%. However, a recent study by the Call of Duty Foundation found that “nearly 1/3 of veteran job seekers are underemployed – a rate that is 15.6% higher than non-veteran job seekers.”<sup>1</sup> One way to create meaningful job opportunities for veterans is by giving preference for federal contracts to companies with high numbers of veteran employees. Yet, while the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is able to provide preference to veteran-owned small businesses when awarding federal contracts, VA is unable to take the number of veterans a prospective contractor employs into account during that process.

The BRAVE Act would authorize VA to give preference to prospective contractors based on the number of veterans they employ on a fulltime basis. To prevent abuse of this authority, any company that willfully and intentionally misrepresents the number of veterans in their workforce would be prohibited from contracting with VA for at least 5 years as a penalty.

### **The Message:**

- Veterans are a vital part of the American workforce and businesses should be incentivized to seek them out when filling open positions.
- Companies that take an active approach to hiring veterans should be recognized and rewarded.
- The BRAVE Act would boost veteran employment by rewarding companies that employ high percentages of veterans with preference in contracts at VA.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.callofdutyendowment.org/content/dam/atvi/callofduty/code/pdf/ZipCODE\\_Vet\\_Report\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.callofdutyendowment.org/content/dam/atvi/callofduty/code/pdf/ZipCODE_Vet_Report_FINAL.pdf)